Minutes Approved at 563rd Meeting - November 6, 2006

GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES
562nd Meeting
October 2, 2006

MEMBERS PRESENT: Arado, Barbe, Bond, Bose, Changnon, Costello, Gowen, Harris, Hurych, Karonis, Lockard, Lusk, Macdonald, Odoms-Young, Riley, Shaw, Slattery, Sims, Waas

MEMBERS ABSENT: Abdel-Motaleb, Aggarwal, Carrier, Factor, Goldenberg, Gupta, Johnson, Muñoz, Shumow

OTHERS PRESENT: Alden (Executive Vice President and Provost), Arntz (Assistant Vice President for Research), Pugh (Graduate School Records Officer), Smith (Catalog Editor/Curriculum Coordinator), Wright (Secretary)

Rathindra N. Bose, Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School, called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

Welcoming Provost Alden and Strategic Planning

Bose introduced Provost Alden and thanked him for attending the meeting. Alden presented the committee with a brief synopsis of his new strategic planning. He stated that the purpose of strategic planning is to unite the University with a clear sense of vision. What can we set as goals or plans to achieve? How can we determine whether we are making progress? Strategic planning has to be a consensus building exercise with people focused on the big picture. Alden sees the university strategic plan as a template for both colleges and departments. Our goals should reflect the values of NIU and the surrounding community. A strategic plan helps our reputation with students, faculty, donors, and nationally. The strategic planning task force will need to identify areas unique to NIU that can be developed. Alden stated that we should look at how NIU can increase interdisciplinary programs. Alden also stated that our mission statement needs updating and focusing. The strategic plan should be in place at the launch of the President’s capital campaign at the end of the spring 2007 semester. Alden is forming a strategic planning task force which will draft ideas and put them on the web, so that they can solicit feedback from the university community. Waas asked how the strategic plan at Alden’s former university (UNLV) was operationalized. Alden responded that the departments developed their own goals and action plans. All new resources were allocated according to strategic priorities in college plans. Sims asked what new resources will become available through the capital campaign. Alden stated that the resources from the capital campaign will be used to advance departments and colleges. The capital campaign and the strategic plan will run parallel for the advancement of the university.
Approval of Minutes
Gowen moved approval of the September 11, 2006 minutes, Karonis seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Priority Business

Selection of a 2006-2007 graduate student representative to the University’s Libraries Advisory Committee: The Graduate Council nominated LaMetra Curry (CAHE) to serve on this committee.

Selection of a 2006-2007 graduate student representative to the University’s Assessment Panel: The Graduate Council nominated Tony Busch (AHP) to serve on this committee.

Provost’s Advisory Committee on Academic Excellence: Bose requested that the Graduate Council nominate a Graduate School representative to serve on this committee. Bose stated that he would be willing to serve on this committee as the Graduate School representative if no one else comes forward. Sims nominated Joseph Dertien, graduate student in the Department of Biology, to represent the Graduate Council as the student member for either the Advisory Committee or the Strategic Planning Task Force.

Committee Reports

Bose announced the chairs of the standing committees for the 2006-2007 academic year. Gowen will chair the Research and Artistry Committee, Waas will chair the Standards Committee, Gupta will chair the Graduate Fellowship Committee, and Harris will chair the Curriculum Committee.

Research and Artistry: Bose stated that the Limited Investment for Research to Enhance Extramural Funds (LIREEF) Committee discussed sending a call for proposals that will be geared toward multi/interdisciplinary research. Bose asked the Research and Artistry Committee to meet in order to discuss the possibility of sending a solicitation early in the spring semester. Bose shared this idea with the Provost who also thought it was a good idea. The Division of Research and Graduate Studies will not be able to fund all proposals, but will have a better idea of what research interests faculty members have across disciplines. At this time, support would be up to $150,000 for multi/interdisciplinary proposals, which would support 3 or 4 per year.

New Business

Electronic Processing of Theses and Dissertations: Bose stated that NIU is one of the few colleges that provides an editing service for theses and dissertations. He has asked the two staff members currently providing this service to hold campus-wide seminars on how to write a thesis or dissertation. These seminars are to help graduate students to prepare better thesis or dissertations. Bose has also initiated a pilot project with four departments, Educational Technology, Research and Assessment; Electrical Engineering; Physics; and Psychology. At this point electronic submission is intended only for the
copy submitted to the Graduate School for editing; after the document is edited it will get sent back to the student electronically. Eventually the entire process will be electronic. Bose stated that NIU can learn from other institutions already operating electronically. This process will take some time. Bose has a five year plan of implementation. Hurych questioned whether the University Library would still receive a paper copy. Bose stated that he is not sure yet, he will have to research what other universities are doing to find out what will work best at NIU.

**Graduate Programs Survey:** Bose distributed a draft of a Graduate Program Survey that he would like to distribute to departments. This year, on-campus enrollment increased by 1.1%, but off-campus enrollment decreased by 4%. Bose would like analyze comprehensive data for all departments in order to have the necessary information to increase program enrollment. The Graduate Council discussed the draft, including many ideas offered to insure that the survey is viable for all departments including those with only professional programs, masters, or those with both masters and doctoral degrees. Bose asked the committee to carefully look over the draft and email any suggestions to Wright. After the survey is updated it will be brought back to the Council for a vote.

**Graduate Student Recognition:** Bose announced that he is interested in having an annual Graduate Student Recognition reception sponsored by the Division of Research and Graduate Studies. This reception would recognize student contributions in teaching, research, etc. The funding for this event could come from unused colloquium funds. The Graduate Council would need to develop certain criteria and ensure that all departments are represented. The Council thought this was an excellent idea.

Sims asked a member of the Graduate Council to represent him at the University Council meeting on October 11 at 3 p.m. Barbe volunteered to attend on his behalf.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.